

REMARKS

Initially, Applicant's representatives sincerely regret the incorrect statement in the Response Under 35 U.S.C. §1.116 filed on December 6, 2005, i.e., to the effect that claim 5 had been indicated to contain allowable subject matter in the Final Official Action dated August 4, 2005. Applicant's representatives note that this inadvertent error resulted from a miscommunication regarding the objection to claims 4 and 6, which was misunderstood as an objection to claims 4 to 6.

Following the submission of the Response Under 35 U.S.C. §1.116, an Advisory Action was issued on January 6, 2006. Applicant would also like to thank the Examiner for indicating in the Advisory Action that claims 2-4, 6-9 and 11-28 would be allowable if submitted in a separate timely-filed amendment. In this regard, in the Advisory Action dated January 6, 2006, amended claims 3, 23 and 25-26 were indicated as allowable without further restriction, and claims 2-4, 6-9 and 11-28 were indicated as allowable if submitted in a separate, timely-filed amendment cancelling the non-allowable claims (i.e., cancelling claims 1, 5 and 10).

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 1, 5 and 10 will have been cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. In view of the cancellation of claims 1, 5 and 10, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections thereof have been rendered moot.

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 2, 3, 23, 25 and 26, each of which previously depended from claim 1, will have been amended to depend from claim 28. Claim 24 will have been amended to eliminate an informality.

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Applicant notes that the features of claims 28 have been indicated as allowable without restriction. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that each of claims 2, 3, 23, 25 and 26 is allowable at least for depending, directly or indirectly, from an allowable independent claim 28, as well as for additional reasons related to their own recitations. Applicant additionally notes that claims 4, 6-9, 11-14 and 24 depend from claim 2. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that each of claims 4, 6-9, 11-14 and 24 is allowable at least for depending, directly or indirectly, from an allowable independent claim, as well as for additional reasons related to their own recitations.

The herein-contained amendments should not be considered an indication of Applicant's acquiescence with the propriety of the outstanding objections and rejections. Rather, Applicant respectfully submits that cancelled claim 1 was allowable at least for the reasons set forth in the Response Under 37 C.F.R. §1.111 filed on March 31, 2005. Nevertheless, Applicant has amended the claims as shown above merely in order to expedite prosecution of the present application and to obtain early allowance of claims.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and objections, and an indication of the allowability of each of the claims now pending.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicant has made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance, and believes that he has now done so. Applicant has amended the claims to cancel rejected claims and/or to amend rejected claims to depend from a claim already indicated as allowable.

Any amendments made by this Response, which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,  
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